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thorns imbued with a poisonous juice into a wooden tube, and blowing herd into it, aim them against wild beasts, and their enemies, by which means they slay them with impunity. P 411 298

The Abipones are unacquainted with shields and targets, but they cover greatest part of their bodies with a sort of defence, made of an undressed anta's hide, a tiger's skin being sewed either in the in or outside; it is open in the middle, that the head may come through, and extended on each side as far as the elbows and middle; it is impenetrable to common arrows, but not to spears and bullets, though it somewhat diminishes their force. To this coat of mail they added a girth wider than a man's hand, of the dressed hide of the same animal, when they saw their leader Debayakaikin wounded in the belly with a spear. They make use of this armour when they have to fight with the other Indians. Most of them, however, expose their bodies entirely naked to the weapons of their enemies, and seem the more secure, as they are more expeditious in avoiding the fatal blow. For the weight and hardness of such armour prevents that agility, which, in their method of fighting, is of such importance to their safety, as much as its thickness protects the body. When they engage with the Spaniards they neglect their bow and wooden A 714 A 713 726

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726 for safety, together with the pastures of cattle, the number of guards, and other particulars of that kind. And so cunningly do these emissaries discharge their office, that they contrive to see all things, and be seen by none.

Leaving their horses for a while, either on the inaccessible bank of a river, or in the recesses of the woods, that they may not be betrayed by their means, they crawl along on their hands and feet, and lurking amongst boughs and bushes observe all things, both at a distance and close at hand. Concealed by the shades of night, they sometimes approach the very houses of the Spaniards, and listening, catch part of the conversation of the persons within; those even that are ignorant of the Spanish tongue, can at least discover, from the tone of the voices, whether the house contain more men or women. That their footsteps may [514] not betray them, they fasten pieces of skin to their feet, by which artifice the marks of human tread are either disguised or destroyed. To [461] obtain a view of distant objects, they frequently climb trees, or stand upright on their horses' backs. They generally send out two or three of these scouts, who separate at night, one taking one road, one another, first fixing upon a time and place to meet together again. That they may be able with the more certainty to

[302] They stain their faces with various colours, to excite fear-
[237] for, and for the same purpose some wear a
714 crown of parrots' feathers, others a red cap
726 sparkling with beads of glass, or snails' shells, and others again place an enormous vulture's wing on their heads. I knew an Abipon who wore the skin of a stag's head, branching with horns, by way of a helmet, whenever he was going to fight, and another who tied the beak of a tuncà to his nose before he entered into an engagement. I always observed that those persons who were most solicitous about rendering their persons terrible to others, had the least courage themselves. The most intrepid, neglecting these precautions, await the weapons of the enemy quite undefended, though they always paint their faces. All sit half naked on the bare
492 back of the best horse they possess, and, in place
726 of a bridle, use a thong fastened to the animal's jaws. They throw away all heavy things, and whatever may retard the speed of the horse, that they may be able to make or avoid an attack with more celerity.

726 The most favourable time for an assault, in their apprehension, is either the beginning or end of the day, when there is just light sufficient to enable them to distinguish all objects. For at dawn or twilight they find more men at home to slay, and those oppressed with sleep: whereas in the day they are generally absent on busi-

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BY WHAT MEANS THE ABIPONES RENDER THEMSELVES FORMIDABLE, AND WHEN THEY ARE JUSTLY TO BE DREADED.

NATURALLY fearful, they render themselves formidable by art. They make up for the want of native bravery by the noise of their trumpets, the craftiness of their ambuscades, by their astonishing swiftness, their painted faces, and many-coloured plumes. They adorn their heads with feathers of various birds, either erected like a crest, or bearing the appearance of a crown. They paint their faces sometimes white or red, but more commonly black. Soot, scraped from pans and kettles, is generally used for this purpose. In travelling, when soot is not to be got, they make a fire, and use its smoke and ashes to paint themselves with. The fruit of the tree Urucuy furnishes them with materials for a red paint: but on sudden occasions they prick their tongues with a thorn, and daub their faces with the blood that flows plenteously from the wound. They do not all paint in the same pattern. Some darken the forehead only, some one cheek, and some both. Some streak the whole face with

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714 302 531 [171] spiral lines; others only make two circles round the eyes; and others again blacken the whole of the face. This custom is common to many other nations of Paraguay, especially the equestrian ones.

534 726 The Abipones render themselves formidable to the eyes, as well as to the ears of their enemies; for they prelude every battle with trumpets, flutes, horns, and clarions, differing in sound, materials, and form. The horn instruments bellow, the wooden ones clatter, and those of bone, which are made of the leg of some large bird or quadruped, emit a very shrill whistle, while those of reeds have a ridiculous creaking sound. Others again, consisting of the tail of the armadillo, to which a reed is prefixed, fill the whole air, to a great distance, with a horrible roaring. I want words to describe the construction and use of all the different trumpets. This is very certain, that the Abipones have more trumpeters than soldiers in their armies. These terrible-sounding instruments they accompany with a savage howl, made by striking their lips with their hands. 726 When rushing to battle they cry aloud, *Laharàlk! Laharàlk!* Let us go, let us go; as the Guranies say, *Yahà! Yahà!* and the Mocobios, *Zokolák! Zokolák!* Whilst the Abipones are in battle, they carry their eyes to every side of the

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jugglers are observed crawling on the ground, or leaping in the streets, and with sullen eyes and a hoarse voice, uttering some omen or curse. You may see the Abipones with their faces stained, with many-coloured feathers in their heads, and arms in their hands, some wearing breastplates, others entirely naked, enter the field with a marching gait, and appearing to threaten the whole world. You may see mountains in labour bring forth ridiculous mice. These heroes, when placed in order of battle, wish to be counted by the Father, as they cannot count themselves. As I walked up and down the ranks, I was frequently asked, "Are we many?" to which I constantly replied, "You are very many;" lest they should be disheartened at their want of numbers. Experience taught me that the towns were mostly attacked by a numerous enemy when very few of the inhabitants were left at home—the rest being dispersed far and wide for the sake of hunting. The sagacious savages make the assault when they have learnt from their spies that the colony is bare of defenders. They form themselves into a square, if the place will admit of it. I observed that they sometimes placed the archers in the midst, and the spearmen on each wing; at others, the archers and spearmen ranged themselves promiscuously.